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### Growing Perennial Flowers in South Dakota

Cooperative Extension South Dakota State University

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growing

# PERENNIAL FLOWERS

in south  
dakota



Cooperative Extension Service  
South Dakota State University  
United States Department of Agriculture



# growing PERENNIAL FLOWERS in south dakota



by DEAN MARTIN, extension horticulturist

Herbaceous perennial flowers are plants that die back to the ground in the fall and renew growth again in the spring. Some perennials live many years, others die out after only a few years.

It is necessary to consider many factors when selecting herbaceous perennials.

Flowers selected for the perennial border should provide a succession of color harmony as the season progresses. The height and spread of the plants must also be considered. Usually, annuals, biennials, and flowering bulbs are included in the border planting.

Early-blooming perennials such as peonies are usually planted in the fall, while later-blooming ones such as chrysanthemums may be planted in early spring. Hollyhock, columbine, delphinium, dianthus, hemerocallis, iris, lilies, peonies, and phlox are ten good perennials for South Dakota.

## Soil...

Most perennials prefer a fertile, well-drained loam soil with a high organic matter content. Prepare the soil to a depth of 15 to 20 inches. Keep the planting well cultivated and at a constant high level of fertility. The planting should receive an application of fertilizer in early spring and again in early summer. A complete fertilizer such as a 10-10-10 analysis at the rate of two pounds per 100 square feet is suitable.

## Mulching...

Summer mulches such as grass clippings or partially rotted leaves may be used to help conserve moisture and maintain an even soil temperature. Winter mulches may be used to protect plants from severe cold, to maintain an even soil temperature, and to prevent too-early growth in the spring. Marsh hay, sudan grass, clean straw or hay, and evergreen boughs are some of the materials suitable for winter mulches. Apply the mulch after the plants are dormant and the ground is frozen. This usually occurs by mid-November. Remove the mulch gradually in the spring as the plants begin to grow.

## Blooming Periods...

**MAY:** phlox divaricata, linum, columbine, iris, dianthus, peony, violas

**JUNE:** iris, delphinium, linum, dianthus, hemerocallis, peony, veronica

**JULY:** hollyhocks, phlox, veronica, lilies, dianthus, hemerocallis

**AUGUST:** phlox, delphinium, chrysanthemum, hemerocallis

**SEPTEMBER:** hardy asters, delphinium, chrysanthemum, lilies

**OCTOBER:** hardy asters, chrysanthemums, gaillardia, coreopsis

## Flower Colors...

**WHITE:** iris, lilies, hollyhocks

**BLUE, LAVENDER, PURPLE:** phlox, columbine, iris, linum, violas, delphinium, veronica, hardy asters

**PINK, ROSE, SALMON:** columbine, iris, hollyhocks, chrysanthemums, hardy asters, phlox, lilies

**YELLOW, ORANGE, BRONZE:** columbine, iris, hollyhocks, chrysanthemums, hemerocallis

## Plant Height...

**LOW:** violas, phlox divaricata, phlox subulata

**MEDIUM:** columbines, iris, linum, veronica, phlox, chrysanthemums

**TALL:** delphinium, lilium candidum, hardy aster, hollyhock, lilium regale

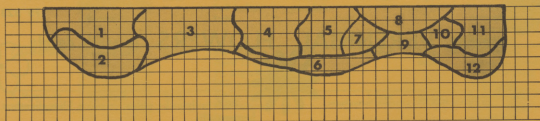
## Planting a Border...

With these things in mind, draw a plan to indicate where each plant should be placed to create the desired effect. A layout for planning a perennial border will help you select the plants you want to use. It will also be helpful in ordering plants and will serve as a guide when planting. (See figure 1.)

After you have chosen the plants you wish to grow—which may include annuals, bulbs, corms, and tubers—you can plan your design. You will need to know the season of bloom, color, size, and height of the plants you have chosen. Locate the plants to create good color and size harmony and a good sequence of bloom. The number of plants, transplants, and seeds needed can also be determined at this time. It may take several attempts to work out a pleasing design, but this is an excellent way to become familiar with the characteristics of the plants you have chosen for your border.

Some plants such as delphiniums will require staking for proper growth and protection.

The tabular lists that follow include the true perennials as well as flowering bulbs. Those bulbs, corms, tubers and roots that must be dug in the fall for winter storage indoors are so indicated in Table 2.



SCALE: 1 inch = 6 feet

#### PLANT LIST

Area No.	Name of Plant (common)	Horticultural Variety	Class A-B-P*	Height D-M-T†	Color	Seeds	Seedlings	No. Plants Required	Season of Bloom	
									From	To
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										
7										
8										
9										
10										
11										
12										

\*A = Annual    D = Dwarf  
B = Biennial    M = Medium  
P = Perennial    T = Tall

Figure 1. A scale-drawn plan showing a possible arrangement for a perennial flower border 36 feet long and 3 to 5 feet wide, with corresponding plant list.

TABLE 1.—PERENNIALS

Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Color	Blooming Period	Uses	Preferred Site
1. <i>Althaea rosea</i>	<b>Hollyhock</b>	4-10 ft.	Various	July, August	Back part of border	Sun
2. <i>Aquilegia</i>	<b>Columbine</b>	2-3 ft.	Blue & White Yellow, Pink	May and June	Border	Sun or Partial Shade
3. <i>Aster</i>	<b>Perennial Aster</b>	1½ ft.	Various	July, August	Borders Cut Flowers	Sun
4. <i>Chrysanthemum Maximum</i>	<b>Shasta Daisy</b>	2-3 ft.	White	June, September	Border Cut Flowers	Sun
5. <i>Chrysanthemum Morifolium</i>	<b>Garden Mums</b>	1-4 ft.	Various	August, November	Border Cut Flowers	Sun
6. <i>Convallaria</i>	<b>Lily of the Valley</b>	10 inches	White	May	Bouquets Corsages Arrangements	Partial shade
7. <i>Coreopsis</i>	<b>Coreopsis (Tickseed)</b>	2½ ft.	Yellow	June, October	Cut Flowers Border	Full sun Moist soil
8. <i>Delphinium Hybridum</i>	<b>Delphinium</b>	4-8 ft.	Various	June, July	Border Cut Flowers	Full sun
9. <i>Dianthus Barbatus</i>	<b>Sweet William</b>	1½ ft.	Various	June, July	Cut Flowers	Full sun
10. <i>Dianthus</i> Several species	<b>Perennial Pinks</b>	6-18 inches	Various	May, September	Cut Flowers	Full sun

Botanical Name	Common Name	Height	Color	Blooming Period	Uses	Preferred Site
11. <i>Dicentra spectabilis</i>	<b>Bleeding Heart</b>	3 feet	Deep Pink	May, June	Borders Cut Flowers	Sun or shade
12. <i>Gaillardia aristata</i>	<b>Blanketflower</b>	1½-2 feet	Yellow, Red	May, October	Border Cut Flowers	Full sun Sandy soil
13. <i>Hemerocallis</i>	<b>Daylily</b>	1½-5 feet	Yellow Orange, Red	May, August	Borders With shrubs Cut Flowers	Sun or partial shade
14. <i>Iris</i> Bearded Dwarf Intermediate Tall Siberian Japanese	<b>Iris</b>	1-2 feet 4-8 inches 2 feet 2-4 feet 2-4 feet 2-4 feet	Various  Various Various	April, May May, June June July	Border Cut Flowers  Border Cut Flowers	Full sun Well drained soil  Sun, prefer wet ground
15. <i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	<b>Lythrum</b> <b>Purple loose strife</b>	3-5 feet	Red-Purple	July, September	Border Cut Flowers	Good in wet soil
16. <i>Paeonia albiflora</i>	<b>Peony</b>	2-3½ feet	White, Pink, Red	May, June	Borders Specimen Cut Flowers Hedges	Most places. Prefer rich soils.
17. <i>Papaver orientale</i>	<b>Oriental Poppy</b>	2-3 feet	White, Orange, Salmon Crimson	May, June	Borders Cut Flowers	Sun or partial shade
18. <i>Phlox</i> Several species	<b>Per. Phlox</b>	6 inches to 2 feet	Various	June, September	Dwarf—Edging, Rockeries Ground Cover Others— Borders, Cut Flowers	Sun or partial shade
19. <i>Physostegia</i>	<b>False Dragonhead</b>	3-feet	Pink	July, September	Borders Cut Flowers	Sun or shade Moist soil
20. <i>Veronica spicata</i>	<b>Speedwell</b>	1-3 feet	Blue, Pink White	June	Borders Cut Flowers	Full sun Moist soil

**TABLE 2.—FLOWERING BULBS**  
(Bulbs, corms, tubers, roots)

Botanical Name	Common Name	Classification	Planting Time	Color	Height	Blooming Period	Preferred Site
1. <i>Begonia</i>	<b>Tuberous Begonia</b>	Tubers	Start tubers in March or April. Put in pots. Set plants out in June. Dig before freezing.	Yellow, White, Salmon, Scarlet, Orange, Pink	1 foot	July, August	Partial shade Wind protection
2. <i>Canna</i>	<b>Canna</b>	Roots	Set outside after danger of frost. Dig in fall.	Red, Pink, Orange, Yellow	4-6 ft.	July, August	Formal beds Background of flower border Deep rich soil—plenty of water
3. <i>Chionodoxa</i>	<b>Glory-of-the-Snow</b>	Bulb	3-4 in. deep Fall before frost	Blue, White, Pink	4-6 in.	April	Border, Rock Garden, well-drained soil
4. <i>Crocus</i>	<b>Crocus</b>	Corm	2 in. deep. Fall before frost.	Various	4-6 in.	April	Grassy areas Formal beds
5. <i>Dahlia</i>	<b>Dahlia</b>	Tubers	6 in. deep Cover with 2 in. of soil at first. May 15-June 15. Dig after frost.	Various	3-6 ft.	August Sept.	Perennial border. Need plenty water.

Botanical Name	Common Name	Classification	Planting Time	Color	Height	Blooming Period	Preferred Site
6. Fritillaria	Guinea-hen flower	Bulb	2-3 in. Fall before frost	White to purplish	1 foot	April	Border, Rock Garden, well-drained soil, needs winter protection.
7. Gladiolus	Gladiolus	Corm	3-6 in. deep April 15-July 15. Dig after killing frost.	Various	3 feet	July, Sept.	Cut flowers groups in shrub border among perennials.
8. Hyacinth orientalis	Hyacinth	Bulb	5-6 in. deep Fall before frost	Various	1 foot	April	Formal beds. Border. Fore-ground of shrub border well-drained soil.
9. Leucojum vernum	Spring Snowflake	Bulb	5 in. deep Fall before frost	White	6-10 inches	April	In clumps Rock Garden Light, well-drained soil
10. Lilium henryi Lilium regale (Many others)	Henry Lily Regal Lily	Bulb	Fall or spring as soon as delivered. Twice as deep as length of bulb.	Orange, Yellow, White	6 feet 4 feet	Summer to Fall	Sun well-drained sandy loam
11. Muscari	Grape-hyacinth	Bulb	2-3 in. deep Fall before frost.	White, Blue	6 inches	April	Border Rock Garden Indoors in winter
12. Narcissus	Includes Narcissus Daffodils & Jonquils	Bulb	Twice as deep as diameter of bulb. September	White, Yellow, White & Yellow, White & Orange, Yellow & Orange	1 foot	April	Borders Beds Wooded areas Cool Soil
13. Scillas	Squill	Bulb	3 in. deep	Blue, White	4-5 inches	April	Rock Garden Flower Border Grassy area
14. Tulipa	Tulip	Bulb	6-8 inches deep in November	Various	12-30 inches	April, May	Massed Border

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